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## TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### House Membership

### Representative Thomas Latham



### Biographical Information

State Representative Thomas Latham has spent most of his life in Northeast Dallas, living and working in communities in and around District 101. He went to school in Mesquite; he made his career as police officer in Garland; and he served on the town council of Sunnyvale – the community he calls home.

Thomas had dedicated his life to various realms of public service. He began early – as a mascot for the Mesquite Fire Department. In 1968, he joined the United States Army and served in the NATO/SHAPE Support Group in Europe, and then volunteered to serve in Vietnam and was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division.

After his honorable discharge from the U.S. Army, Thomas returned to Mesquite, Texas. He decided to pursue a career in law enforcement on August 1, 1966; the tragic day that an emotionally disturbed man named Charles Whitman climbed the University of Texas tower in Austin and opened fire on innocent people below.

Thomas recalls explaining his decision to his uncle. He said, "Someone has to be willing to go up in the tower (and apprehend the sniper)."

In 1971 he joined the Garland Police Department and worked his way through the ranks to Commander. He retired after 30 years, in 2001. Afterward, Thomas pledged his service and dedication to his community of Sunnyvale.

He was elected to the Sunnyvale Town Council and the Sunnyvale Board of Adjustments, and was re-elected to both in 2005. In 2002, he was

appointed to the Sunnyvale Planning and Zoning Commission. In 2003 he broadened his commitment to public service and joined the Dallas County Sheriff Reserves. He was selected to serve on the North Central Texas Council of Governments' Criminal Justice Policy and Review Committee in 2004.

Throughout his career, Thomas has been recognized for courage, determination and leadership. Beyond his career responsibilities, Thomas has maintained a keen interest in public education. Nine members of his family, including his wife and daughter, are involved in public education – in positions ranging from teachers to administrators.

His wife Mary, a retired teacher, serves on the board of directors for the Sunnyvale Education Foundation. Both volunteer for Friends of Texas Public Schools, a non-profit organization that is devoted to improving public schools through positive reinforcement and public recognition of school success stories.

Thomas and Mary are the proud parents of Leslie Latham-Milder, who teaches government in public schools in the Dallas area. Leslie and her husband Scott have three children: Thomas, Grace and Mandy.

The Lathams are equally proud of their nephew, Nick, who serves in the U.S. Army. While on a tour of duty in Iraq, Nick was shot and injured. He refused treatment so he could continue to serve alongside his fellow soldiers. His bravery and exemplary service eventually led to a Bronze Star for valor. Of his nephew, Thomas said, "He's always given 110 percent to things that are important to him -- especially his country and his family. He's exactly the kind of person you'd want to have defending your country and protecting your freedom."

*last updated on 01/23/2007*

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